

CHESTERFIELD COUNTY, VIRGINIA PLANNING DEPARTMENT

CONTACT INFORMATION

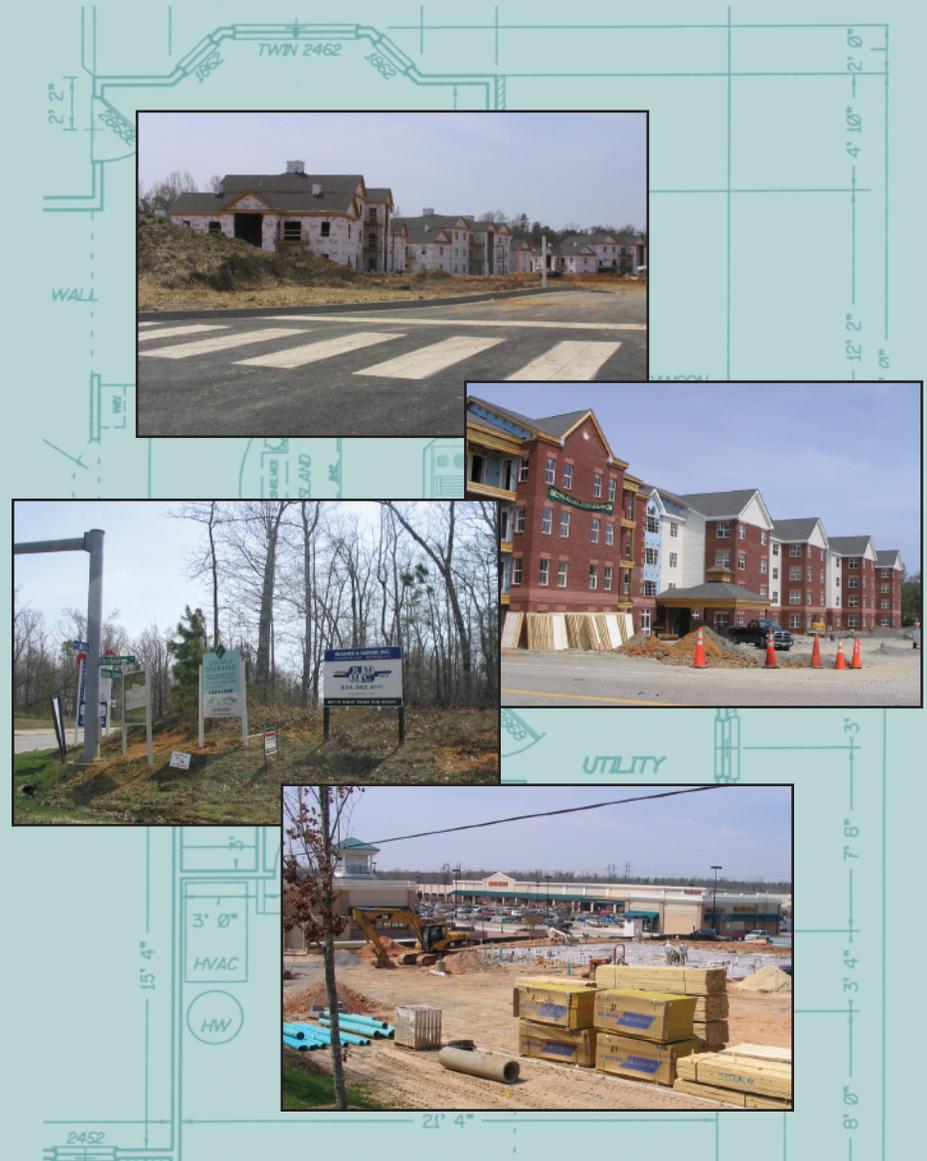
Building Inspections	748-1057
Environmental Engineering	748-1035
Fire and Life Safety	748-1426
Planning Department	748-1050
Transportation	748-1037
Utilities Department	748-1271
Virginia Department of Transportation	674-2800

For online information, visit www.chesterfield.gov

CHESTERFIELD COUNTY'S VISION

Our vision is to be the recognized leader in government, the standard by which others measure their progress and success. Every employee has a personal devotion to excellence in public service and embraces the highest standards of ethics and integrity. Every resident takes pride in knowing that the county provides the best customer service and the finest quality of life available in any American community.

SITE PLAN PROCESS



Providing a FIRST CHOICE community
through excellence in public service

What is a site plan?

A site plan is a set of construction drawings that a builder or contractor uses to make improvements to a property. Chesterfield County uses the site plan to verify that development codes are being met and as a historical resource. Site plans must be prepared by a design consultant who must be either an engineer, architect, landscape architect or land surveyor licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia to perform such work.

Your design consultant prepares a complete site plan and submits it to the Planning Department for distribution and review by the team. Staff will call and give you the date when you and your design team are expected to attend the mandatory staff-developer meeting at the end of the first review, and to give you the number assigned to your site plan. This number allows you to see staff review comments as they are completed by accessing the county Web site at www.chesterfield.gov/plan. The weekly deadline for submitting new site plans is Tuesday by 5 p.m., and your mandatory staff-developer meeting is 29 days later on a Wednesday.

Your design consultant then revises the site plan based upon the written review comments and as amended during discussion at the staff-developer meeting. The consultant then resubmits the plan through the Planning Department. The review team, again, reviews the plans and forwards either an approval letter or additional review comments to you and your design consultant. This process repeats itself until all review comments have been addressed, at which time the plans are marked approved and an approval letter is issued.

Process for site plans

The site plan process begins with a preliminary meeting between you, your design consultant and the county review team. This meeting may be scheduled by requesting an appointment with the review team through the Planning Department, (804) 748-1050. The county's review team consists of representatives from the county's Planning, Environmental Engineering, Utilities, Transportation, Fire and EMS, Police and Health departments. The Virginia Department of Transportation is also represented. At this meeting, it will be determined if your plan will be processed for administrative or Planning Commission approval. Approximately 95 percent of all plans are processed administratively.



How long is my site plan valid?

Site plans are valid for five years from the date of approval. VDOT approval of the land-use permit is good for one year.

Are there other organizations that must participate in the review and approval of my project?

Yes, depending upon the type of use proposed (such as industrial uses) and its location, federal and state agencies also may review your plans, i.e., U.S. Army Corps. Of Engineers regarding wetlands, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality for discharges to air or water, or the Virginia Department of Health for certain utility extensions. Local power, gas, telephone and cable companies may need your plans to schedule and provide service. Please consult with your real-estate agent, design consultant, county staff and other knowledgeable individuals for guidance.

What is the mandatory staff-developer meeting?

This meeting occurs on the fourth Wednesday after the date your site plan is first submitted. You will receive comments from the review team approximately one week before this meeting. You may see review comments earlier by accessing them on the county Web site at www.chesterfield.gov/plan. The purpose of this meeting is for you and your design consultant to discuss any comment with which you disagree, or do not understand, with the review team and resolve the issue. Your design consultant then should be able to address the comments on the revised site plan.

How can I get more information about the county's process before I schedule a preliminary meeting?

The Planning Department has additional brochures, checklists and other resources to provide more detailed information. Customer-service representatives in the Planning Department are available to answer general questions at (804) 748-1050 or at the front counter.

What happens after I receive approval of my site plan?

After the site plan is approved and any necessary rights of way or easements have been acquired and recorded, a land disturbance permit may be issued and the site work may begin. Construction of your building may begin once your building permit is approved by all departments. Virginia Department of Transportation land-use permits are required before any work can be performed in any public road right of way. Call VDOT for information regarding land-use permits at (804) 674-2800.



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How long does this process take?

Every site and site plan is different and has unique features that must be addressed. A typical site requires an average of three submittals to the county to obtain approval, which comes 90 to 120 days after the date of first submittal. Approval of your plan may take more or less time depending on the thoroughness of your design consultant and the complexity of your site.

How can I shorten this process?

You can directly influence the cycle time of your project by staying involved with your design team throughout your review process. You should follow the work of your design team and guide them in setting a timely work schedule. You should review the team's work to ensure they completely and thoroughly respond to the county's review checklist for the first submittal and to the staff review comments on subsequent submittals. The county review team also has a variety of processing tools that, under appropriate circumstances, allow for table reviews of plans with the entire team present or early release of permits for land disturbance or footing and foundation permits. Consult with the Planning Department about the appropriateness of phased approvals.

When may I apply for a building permit?

The building permit review process and review of specific building and systems drawings can run concurrent with the site-plan review. The building permit application and associated drawings may be submitted to Building Inspections at the same time as site plans are submitted to the Planning Department or later, whichever you prefer. For information about the building-permit process, contact the Building Inspections Department at (804) 748-1057.



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How do I know if the property I'm considering is suitable for my proposed development?

Generally, the more investigative work you perform before purchasing property, the fewer problems you will experience in obtaining approvals to build. At a minimum, you should visit the Planning Department and have staff provide you information about the zoning of the property and what uses are allowed. County staff can also provide information that helps you determine if the property is large enough to accommodate your project by providing information about setbacks, buffers, public easements and rights of way and parking requirements. Your design team should also evaluate areas needed for storm-water drainage facilities, resource protection areas, fire protection and access.

How do I get started?

Once you have selected a design consultant, call the Planning Department at 748-1050 and request an appointment form for a preliminary meeting. Complete the form, fax it as directed, and it will be returned to you with a confirmed meeting date, time and location.

Who should attend the review team preliminary meeting?

Both you and your design consultant should attend. Your consultant should attend because of the technical nature of the discussion and you, so that you may actively participate and so that anything you don't understand can be made clear to you. Important, and perhaps costly, decisions often are made during this meeting. The entire process works best when you — the owner — participate in making the decisions that directly affect the construction budget and the quality and appearance of the facility.



What questions should I ask at the preliminary meeting?

The following questions provide a general, yet fairly comprehensive, overview of areas of concern. They do not cover all items that may impact the intended use of the property, or the costs or time it will take to gain approval. These questions will be helpful as you interview and select a design consultant and talk about properties with real-estate agents. They may lead to other questions that will help you make good decisions about the development potential for the site before you have invested a significant amount of money.

- What are the existing and ultimate right-of-way widths for adjacent public roads?
- What are the recommended access locations?
- What road improvements can I expect to make with my proposed development?
- Are there any proposed county or state road-improvement projects in the area?
- Are there any internal circulation issues with traffic?
- Will fire lanes be required?
- Will existing fire hydrants serve the site, or will new hydrants be required?
- How many access points to the site are needed for fire protection?
- Is public water/sewer available to my property?
- Am I required to use public water/sewer?
- Am I required to dedicate any additional easements?
- Am I required to provide a monitoring manhole in the sewer line?
- Does the site have an adequate outfall for storm-water runoff?
- What will be the requirement for compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Act Ordinance?
- Do floodplains exist on the site?
- Will curb and gutter be required?
- Are there any zoning or other public-hearing cases that apply to this site?
- Is the use permitted by zoning?
- What are the required setbacks?
- Are there any buffers required?
- Are there any requirements to save trees?
- What are the architectural requirements?
- Are utilities, such as electric, cable and telephone, required to be underground?
- What are the parking requirements?
- If I have truck-loading areas or outside storage, what type of visual screening is required?
- What general and specific information must be shown on the plan?